



THE METROPOLITAN WATER DISTRICT
OF SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

Committee Item INFORMATION

Legislation and Communications Committee

6/8/2026 Committee Meeting

6b

Subject

Proposed CAMP4W Community Engagement Standards

Executive Summary

Proposed CAMP4W Community Engagement Standards were created to guide community engagement and inform project and program assessments for the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water. Beyond CAMP4W, these Standards may also serve as a reference for other external engagement activities of Metropolitan.

Fiscal Impact

No fiscal impact. Staff led the development of the proposed Standards and will be responsible for their implementation.

Applicable Policy

Not applicable

Related Board Action(s)/Future Action(s)

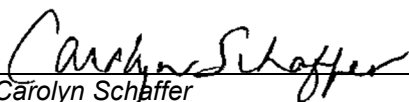
By Minute Item 53436, dated April 8, 2025, the Board approved the Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water Five-Year Implementation Strategy.

Under Agenda Item 8-1 for June 9, 2026, the Board will consider amending the Administrative Code to incorporate board policy on climate action and adaptation.

Details and Background

The Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) is a process the Board adopted to help guide future investments and decisions on infrastructure projects, programs, and policies to strengthen water reliability for Metropolitan's service area amid an unpredictable future brought by climate change. One of the goals of CAMP4W is to engage with the diverse communities in Metropolitan's service area "to listen, communicate transparently, and create solutions together for greater equity as we plan for and adapt to climate change." The proposed CAMP4W Community Engagement Standards (**Attachment 1**) were created to address a goal within Metropolitan's Five-Year Implementation Strategy for CAMP4W, released in April 2025. Item 6.4.8 in the strategy indicates that Metropolitan will develop community engagement Standards. Beyond CAMP4W, these Standards may also serve as a reference for other external engagement activities of Metropolitan.

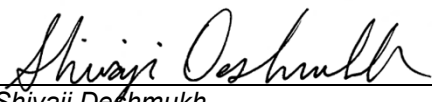
The Standards were developed through input from Metropolitan staff, member agencies, environmental organizations, community groups, and members of the public. They are intended to be a living document that will be reviewed and updated regularly.



Carolyn Schaffer
Group Manager, External Affairs

5/29/2026

Date



Shivaji Deshmukh
General Manager

5/29/2026

Date

Attachment 1 – Draft CAMP4W Community Engagement Standards

Ref# ea12706824

Draft CAMP4W Community Engagement Standards

Introduction

The Climate Adaptation Master Plan for Water (CAMP4W) is a process the Board adopted to help guide future investments and decisions on infrastructure projects, programs, and policies to strengthen water reliability for Metropolitan's service area amid an unpredictable future brought by climate change. One of the goals of CAMP4W is to engage with the diverse communities in Metropolitan's service area "to listen, communicate transparently, and create solutions together for greater equity as we plan for and adapt to climate change." The proposed Community Engagement Standards were created to address a goal within Metropolitan's Five-Year Implementation Strategy for CAMP4W, released in April 2025. Item 6.4.8 in the strategy indicates that Metropolitan will develop community engagement standards. Beyond CAMP4W, these Standards may also serve as a reference for other external engagement activities of Metropolitan.

Objectives

The Community Engagement Standards will be used to:

- Guide engagement for projects, programs, and initiatives considered under CAMP4W.
- Assist in evaluating projects, programs, and initiatives under the CAMP4W criteria and in furtherance of its goals.
- Facilitate high-quality, accessible engagement that creates meaningful opportunities for communities to learn about and participate in Metropolitan's CAMP4W efforts.

While developed for CAMP4W, the Standards could also inform other external engagement efforts by Metropolitan. Where appropriate, the Standards could serve as a reference to navigate engagement on other Metropolitan projects, programs, and initiatives.

Development of Standards

The Community Engagement Standards were developed with input from Metropolitan staff, member agencies, environmental groups, community organizations, and members of the public. Through workshops, meetings, a listening session, and a survey, more than 100 participants provided valuable feedback that helped shape them.

The Standards are intended to be a living document and will be reviewed and updated regularly.

Definition of Community

To effectively implement the Standards, it is essential to define what is meant by “community.”

Community, for the purpose of the Standards, refers to the parties who have an interest in a project, program, or initiative due to its potential benefits, impacts, or outcomes. This definition includes both parties within the Metropolitan service area and impacted areas beyond it. An impacted area is one where the effects of infrastructure, projects, programs, or initiatives may be present.

The Standards

Metropolitan’s Community Engagement Standards are organized into six key themes, each supported by specific approaches and strategies.

1. Identify and understand relevant communities.

- a. Locate relevant communities by considering impacted areas, service areas, and/or additional areas that may have an interest in the outcomes.
- b. Study demographics, determine spoken languages, and evaluate cultural insights.
- c. Assess how community members access information and engage with community priorities.
- d. Understand water-related issues as well as broader community challenges, needs, and opportunities.
- e. Identify trusted messengers and influencers within the community.

2. Secure resources to conduct meaningful engagement.

- a. Evaluate existing resources for capacity to implement engagement.
- b. Secure staff and funding.
- c. Initiate coordination with member agencies.
- d. Identify external services, coalitions, and partnerships.
- e. Define roles and responsibilities for internal and external parties.
- f. Develop a clear plan or task list to help guide engagement.
- g. Establish metrics, track results, evaluate outcomes, and refine engagement activities as needed to improve effectiveness.

3. Engage early and often.

- a. Find multiple opportunities to engage with communities and exchange information before, during, and after a project, program, and/or initiative.
- b. Clearly and transparently communicate goals, limitations, and decision-making processes early on to build trust.
- c. Offer opportunities to tour facilities or project sites, if applicable.
- d. Seek input by providing community feedback opportunities and encouraging two-way engagement as much as possible.
- e. Listen and respect community feedback and share how their input factors into decisions.
- f. Continue relationships beyond project, program, and/or initiative completion.

4. Meet communities where they are.

- a. Participate in existing community events and meetings to engage with communities in places they already gather.
- b. Partner with member agencies, community-based organizations, environmental groups, educational institutions, public agencies, Native American and tribal groups, community leaders, and/or other trusted messengers.
- c. Develop customizable toolkits, social media content, and messaging for partner organizations, as needed.
- d. Utilize platforms and channels that already successfully reach and engage relevant communities.
- e. Consider sociopolitical challenges and create a safe, respectful space for engagement.
- f. Respect community members' time and recognize that their capacity to engage may be limited.

5. Ensure information and opportunities are accessible to audiences.

- a. Choose language that is clear and inclusive. (See item 6.)
- b. Provide accessible and/or familiar meeting locations, convenient timing, and flexible formats including virtual and/or hybrid options. Consider other support or funding that may be appropriate.

- c. Offer reasonable accommodations for people with disabilities, medical needs, and/or religious practices.
- d. Consider state and federal accessibility standards when developing materials.
- e. Share opportunities for participation in public meetings and comment processes.

6. Choose language that is clear and inclusive.

- a. Use plain language to make information easy to understand.
- b. Avoid technical jargon, including acronyms.
- c. Deliver accurate information and clearly communicate project details, impacts, and benefits to the community.
- d. Incorporate culturally relevant messaging that reflects the values, priorities, languages, and lived experiences of the community.
- e. Provide translated materials and interpretation services in languages spoken by the community. Include visual elements to communicate key messages.